

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 216934

FOR AMB. YOUNG FROM UNA

FOLLOWING REPEAT PRETORIA 4943 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO CAPE TOWN
DURBAN JOHANNESBURG AUG 24.

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 4943

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, SF

SUBJECT: MEETING OF AFRIKANER AND SOWETO LEADERS

REFS: A) JOHANNESBURG A-96, B) PRETORIA A-71

1. AT THE INVITATION OF DIE TRANSVALER EDITOR, WILLEM DE
KLERK, A GROUP OF AFRIKANER AND SOWETO BLACK LEADERS MET DURING
THE WEEK OF AUGUST 14 IN JOHANNESBURG. THE GROUP INCLUDED PROF.
GERRIT VILJOEN, RANDS AFRIKAANS UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT AND
BROEDERHOND CHIEF; DR. NTHATHO MOTLANA, SOWETO COMMITTEE OF TEN
CHAIRMAN; AND DR. SIPHO MYEMBEZI, INKATHA LEADER IN SOWETO. JOIN-
ING THESE CENTRAL FIGURES WERE DIE TRANSVALER ASSISTANT EDITORS
ANDRIES BOTHA AND P.G. DU PLESSIS; INKATHA LEADER JOHN
MAVUSO; RAND DAILY MAIL REPORTER STEVE KGAME; GENERAL MINING
PERSONNEL MANAGER NASS STEENKAMP; MOKGOTLA LEADER SIEGRRIED
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MANHATA; BANK MANAGER TOM MOLETE AND S. A. BREWERIES
REPRESENTATIVE LEON SHIRLEY.

2. ACCORDING TO PRESS ACCOUNTS, THE MEETING IS THE FIRST IN A
SERIES. ALL ARE TO BE HELD IN PRIVATE BUT THE SUBSTANCE OF THE
MEETINGS IS TO BE PUBLISHED SIMULTANEOUSLY IN DIE TRANSVALER AND
THE RAND DAILY MAIL. THE FIRST MEETING, REPORTED WITHOUT

ATTRIBUTION OF CONTENTS TO SPECIFIC PARTICIPANTS, WAS PUBLISHED ON AUGUST 21 AND IS REPORTED REF A. FUTURE MEETINGS WILL BE REPORTED BY AIRGRAM.

3. BASED ON THE REPORTS OF THE FIRST TWO MEETINGS AND TALKS WITH ONE PARTICIPANT, DR. MOTLANA, IT APPEARS THE SUBSTANCE REVOLVES AROUND THE ROLE OF THE URBAN BLACK, TOWNSHIP AUTONOMY AND THE FUTURE OF SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT POLICY. THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT THE SERIES OF MEETINGS HAS SAG APPROVAL, ALTHOUGH THE HIGH LEVEL OF THE AFRIKANER PARTICIPANTS WOULD INDICATE THAT THE SAG WAS AT LEAST AWARE IN ADVANCE.

4. REACTIONS TO THE MEETINGS HAVE BEEN MIXED AND CONTROVERSIAL. EDITORIALY, ALMOST ALL DAILY PAPERS HAVE WELCOMED THEM; INCLUDING THE BLACK-RUN DAILY, THE POST. THE PREVAILING VIEW IS THAT THE VERY FACT THAT SUCH A MEETING IS TAKING PLACE IS "HISTORIC," THE FIRST TIME THAT AFRIKANER AND BLACK LEADERS HAVE TALKED ABOUT THE FUTURE. THE POST SAYS IT IS "NOT NAIVE ENOUGH TO SAY THAT SUCH FIRST CONTACT WILL PRODUCE SOMETHING DYNAMIC" BUT FEELS IT IS A MOVE IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. MORE ACTIVIST CONTACTS WITHIN THE BLACK CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT HAVE SHOWN A GREAT DEAL OF SKEPTICISM ABOUT THE MEETING, PARTICULARLY BECAUSE OF THE STRONG INKATHA PRESENCE. EMBOFF HAS HEARD FROM SOME CONTACTS THAT MOTLANA'S CREDIBILITY IS AT STAKE IF HE DOESN'T MAKE A STRONG PUBLIC STATEMENT ON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE MEETINGS, PARTICULARLY SINCE THE FIRST PRESS ACCOUNTS INDICATED THAT CONFIDENTIAL

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THE WHITES ARE NOT QUESTIONING THE BASIC TENETS OF SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT.

5. MOTLANA SEEMS WELL AWARE OF THE POSSIBLE DISCREDIT HIS PARTICIPATION COULD CAST ON HIMSELF AND HE TOLD EMBOFFS THAT HE WAS CONSIDERING MAKING A STATEMENT ON HIS OWN AND MIGHT NOT TAKE PART IN ANY OF THE REMAINING MEETINGS. THE REASON HE MIGHT NOT PROCEED, HE SAID, WAS THAT THE AFRIKANER PARTICIPANTS SHOWED NO INDICATION THAT THEY WERE READY TO QUESTION THE EXCLUSION OF THE BLACK FROM PARTICIPATION IN THE BODY POLITIC OF SOUTH AFRICA WITH THE WHITE. MOTLANA SAID HE HAD TOLD THEM FRANKLY THAT WITHOUT ADDRESSING THAT POINT, THE GROUP HAD NOTHING FURTHER TO DISCUSS. MOTLANA SAID THE FIRST SESSION HAD REVOLVED AROUND THE STATUS OF THE COMMUNITY COUNCILS AND WAS LED ON THE BLACK SIDE BY INKATHA LEADER NYEMBEZI. IT WAS HIS OPINION, HE SAID, THAT INKATHA WAS BEING GROOMED BY THE NATIONALISTS TO TAKE A LEADING ROLE IN URBAN COMMUNITY COUNCILS BECAUSE THEY WOULD BE COOPERATIVE WITH THE SAG'S OBJECTIVES. MOTLANA SPOKE VERY DISPARAGINGLY OF INKATHA AND BUTHELEZI.

6. COMMENT: WHILE DRAWING SUSPICION FROM THE BLACK ACTIVIST COMMUNITY AND BEING CONDUCTED WITHOUT A SAG PRESENCE, THE MEETINGS

DO MARK SOMETHING OF A WATERSHED IN THAT THEY REFLECT GROWING CONCERN AMONG SOME AFRIKANERS OVER THE UNWILLINGNESS OR INABILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT TO ADDRESS THE PROBLEMS OF URBAN BLACKS AND HOW THEY RELATE TO ANY FINAL PROJECTED SCHEME. THAT VILJOEN AND OTHERS ARE SPEAKING ABOUT "CONFEDERAL SYSTEMS" AND EVEN LEAVING THE FUTURE OPEN BY ASSERTING THEY MAY HAVE TO CONSIDER "OTHER POLITICAL PATHS," (AS VILTJOEN STATED IN A RECENT INTERVIEW - REF B) SUGGESTS MOVEMENT IN THE ATTITUDES OF AFRIKANER INTELLECTUALS. THIS MOVEMENT, HOWEVER, IS NOT AT LPRESENT REFLECTED IN GOVERNMENT THINKING, AND THERE IS SERIOUS QUESTIONING WITHIN THE BLACK COMMUNITY WHETHER THIS DEVELOPMENT IS REALLY SIGNIFICANT. THE MEETING, NEVERTHELESS, IS A POSITIVE INDICATOR IN A SITUATION THAT HAS BEEN MARKED BY ALMOST COMPLETE NON-COMMUNICATION BETWEEN BLACK AND WHITE.
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